additional credit of Rs. 1050 crore (approximately) on creation of buffer stock. The buffer subsidy amount and the additional credit are to be exclusively used for liquidation of cane price arrears of sugarcane farmers.

(ii) Export assistance to defray expenditure on internal transport, marketing and handling charges and ocean freight @ Rs. 1350/- per tonne for sugar factories located in coastal areas and Rs. 1450/- per tonne for sugar factories located in non-coastal areas (subject to actuals for export by road/rail to neighbouring countries) have been announced for a period of one year with effect from 19th April, 2007. The amount involved is Rs. 205 crore (approximately) which is to be borne from Sugar Development Fund. The export assistance is also to be used exclusively for cane price arrears payment.

(iii) Ban on export of sugar has been removed in January, 2007 and requirement of obtaining an export release order for export of sugar except for exports to EU countries and USA has been withdrawn *w.e.f.* 31.07.2007, for the current and next sugar season.

Additional funds for suicide belt

1385. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the reason for not processing the additional funds allocated for farmers in the suicide belt of Vidarbha;

(b) what is the actual additional amount required for farmers in the suicide belt of Vidarbha; and

(c) when the fund is expected to be finally released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) No such proposal is pending with the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise. However, Government of India has already approved a Rehabilitation Package amounting to Rs. 3873.26 crore for the farmers in six identified suicide prone districts of Vidarbha Region of Maharashtra namely Akola, Wardha, Amravati, Buldana, Wasim and Yavatmal. Upto 27th July, 2007, Rs. 771.26 crore and Rs. 1078.37 crore has been released by the Government of India and State Government of Maharashtra respectively for the implementation of the rehabilitation package.

Unabated suicide of farmers in Vidarbha

1386. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that suicide by farmers particularly in Vidarbha (Maharashtra) continued unabated;

(b) if so, the details of incidents of suicide during May, June, July, 2007;

(c) the reasons found common, if any, in these incidents;

(d) whether any step has been taken by Government to ameliorate difficulties of debt-trapped farmers in Vidarbha and other vulnerable regions in the country;

(e) whether any exercise to determine the effectiveness of the steps initiated has been conducted; and

(f) if so, the outcome thereof indicating the reasons for their failure in restraining the farmers in distress from taking the extreme step?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The details of suicide during May, June and July, 2007 as reported by the State Government are as under:

	May	June	July
No. of cases	102	82	75

Indebtedness is the most important common reason for suicide by farmers.

Government has approved a Rehabilitation Package involving an amount of Rs. 16978.69 crore for 31 Districts in the four States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Kerala, reporting high number of suicides by farmers. The package includes six Districts of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra involving a total amount of Rs. 3873.26 crore. Besides, an Expert Group constituted by the Government of India under the Chairmanship of Prof. R. Radhakrishna to look into the problems of agricultural indebtedness in its totality and suggest measures to provide relief to farmers across the country as submitted its report and the Government has initiated the process of consultation on its recommendation.

(e) and (f) Progress of implementation of rehabilitation package is being monitored and reviewed on a regular basis at District, State and Central level. Feed back received from the State Government regarding implementation of package indicates that it has made positive impact on mitigating the distress of farmers in the identified Districts.

Dairy development

1387. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount spent/to be spent on agriculture in the country during 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08 and what per cent it is of GDP;

(b) out of the above, the amount and per cent of GDP to be spent on dairy development in the country, year-wise;

(c) the amount proposed to be allocated to Rajasthan in 2007-08 for agriculture and dairy development and its comparison with previous two years;

(d) the amount allocated to the State for agricultute and dairy development during Tenth Plan, year-wise;